



NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release: Oct. 21, 2004
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East Central Indiana companies join Indiana@Work; 773 potential and incumbent workers to benefit

INDIANAPOLIS, Ind. —Gov. Joe Kernan announced today that 773 east central Indiana workers would be strengthening their skills and improving the efficiency of four businesses as the newest participants in the Indiana@Work program.

Grant County's **Amcast Automotive**, Wayne County's **Landis/Berry Plastics, Inc.** as well as Madison County's **Home Design Products** and **Steel Slitting Co.** have all signed onto the program. The companies, which will receive a total of \$54,424 in funding, will assess the skills of up to 773 new and existing employees and profile 18 different occupational categories. Administered by the Indiana Department of Workforce Development, Indiana@Work identifies and develops an individual's skills, aids business by defining skills required for specific jobs, and then matches workers to available jobs.

"As Indiana's economy continues to improve following the national recession, we must continue working together to position our communities, businesses and workforce to be successful," said Kernan. "Through Indiana@Work we are helping employers identify the type of skills they need to look for when hiring staff. At the same time, through skills assessments, we are offering workers an impartial view of their skills, and based on those abilities, we are matching people to available positions."

AMCAST Automotive, located in Gas City, received \$12,752 to assess the skills of 183 incumbent workers and 82 potential new hires, while profiling its machine, cast, desprue and finish line operator positions as the company seeks to increase efficiency and fill vacancies. With annual sales of approximately \$576 million, AMCAST Automotive is a leading manufacturer of cast aluminum wheels for the automotive, construction and industrial industries. Employing 281 people in Grant County, the facility is owned by Ohio-based AMCAST Industrial Corp., which operates 16 facilities throughout North America and Europe, including facilities in Elkhart, Franklin, Fremont, Gas City, Geneva, and Richmond, Ind.

"As AMCAST continues to grow, the opportunities made available through Indiana @Work will be of great assistance to us," said Larry Hein, AMCAST's human resource manager. "With the information gained through this process, we can hire better suited and better qualified people, and we can offer more precise training to our workers. Ultimately, this helps strengthen our workforce, our company and our product."

Richmond's **Landis/Berry Plastics, Inc.** facility has received \$10,592 to assess the skills of up to 40 potential new hires and profile its molding inspector packer, printing machine operator, molding machine handler and printing machine handler positions. Owned by Evansville-based Berry Plastics, the company is a leading manufacturer of injection molded and thermoformed plastic packaging and containers used by the food, dairy and housewares industries.

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Headquartered in Anderson, **Home Design Products** can assess 500 workers to fill 100 job openings through \$20,800 in funding from Indiana@Work. Five jobs will be profiled including machine operator, fork truck driver, quality auditors, process checkers as well as tool and die maintenance technicians. As a division of the Keter Group, HDP produces plastic injection molded shelving and storage products and currently employs 175 people. The Keter Group, headquartered in Israel, is a global producer of plastic consumer products.

"Because we are expanding our operations in a new community, the skills assessments allow us to objectively evaluate the skill levels of each individual against the job profile, which helps us to identify and place qualified applicants," said the company's human resources manager, Darleen VanHeirseele. "This allows us to hit the ground running and become more competitive within a shorter amount of time."

Also participating in Indiana@Work is Elwood's **Steel Slitting Co., Inc.** Employing 21 Hoosier workers, the custom steel slitting company has been awarded \$10,280 to assess the skills of 13 workers and profile its slitter operator, floor manager, set up, forklift driver and bander posts.

Indiana@Work, a joint effort between the Indiana Department of Workforce Development (DWD) and the Indiana Department of Commerce, builds around Energize Indiana's four targeted sectors: advanced manufacturing, information technology, life sciences and high-tech distribution. Available through the state's WorkOne and WorkOne Express Centers, Indiana@Work has made skills assessments available to more than 26,000 Hoosiers and companies statewide have requested nearly 550 job profiles since its inception in January.

WorkKeys® skills assessments, a comprehensive system developed by ACT® that determines and categorizes the skills necessary for a specific job, is the centerpiece of Indiana@Work. It also matches the individual's skill level to particular job requirements and serves as a foundation for training programs that close skill gaps and develop a more capable workforce.

Job profiling, the employer segment of WorkKeys®, helps businesses identify the skills and skill levels needed for workers to be successful on the job. Professional job analysts work with experienced employees to define the duties of each occupation and together, they create specific job profiles.

Through its various programs and initiatives, DWD is charged with continually improving the Hoosier workforce by assisting companies to create new jobs and improve employee skills. The agency offers a variety of training and educational grants, partners with the state's 27 WorkOne Centers, administers the unemployment insurance system, provides labor market information, assists employers with preparing workers for layoffs and closures, and operates the a statewide job placement service.

For more information on this or other DWD programs, call 1-800-465-4616 or visit the web site at www.workforce.IN.gov.

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